

OUR EXPERIENCE

Tsunami Drill in the District of Bantul

Exercising Warning Mechanism and Reactions of the Community

THE INITIATIVE

The tsunami experienced in the district of Bantul in 2006 made the community aware that relevant measures to anticipate earthquakes and tsunamis in the future must be put in place. By end of 2006, the local government installed 8 sirens placed in community activity centres along the coast in Bantul that are operable simultaneously from a distance. Socialisation of basic relevant information to the people and a tsunami drill were carried out in the same year. The exemplary initiatives of the local community in Bantul convinced GITEWS to select Bantul as a part of the pilot area in Java.

Since January 2007, Bantul, together with the districts of Kebumen and Cilacap, participated in the pilot area of Java to develop capacities for tsunami early warning at local level. The consistent commitment of Bantul in the overall process has positioned Bantul to establish the main components and presently to operate the 'end-to-end' tsunami early warning mechanism – linking the National Tsunami Warning Centre at BMKG and the local community in the risk areas.

The local warning mechanism and the preparedness mechanisms were tested in a full-scale tsunami drill conducted in Bantul on the 24th of December 2008.

THE GOAL

The tsunami drill in Bantul was primarily intended to jointly exercise the function of the local warning centre 'PUSDALOPS', the agreed reactions of the people and the related stakeholders in occurrence of a tsunami. Further, it provided an opportunity to examine the effectiveness of the dissemination technology installed within the community. Some lessons observed from each performing component were also compiled and will be used for future improvement.

WHAT HAS BEEN ACHIEVED?

The tsunami drill has enabled close observation of the operation of the improved local early warning components. Specifically, the local warning centre 'PUSDALOPS' is currently capable of receiving warnings issued by the National Tsunami Warning Centre at BMKG, to analyse the warning and to make a decision upon it in line with the applied procedures and references, and in timely manner to disseminate warning and guidance to the communities at risk. Warnings and guidance from 'PUSDALOPS' can be disseminated to the people via modified speakers and/or sirens installed in the mosques in the vicinity, VHF radios operated by Search and Rescue (SAR) and individual community, and other electronic communication media, such as local broadcasting radios & TV stations. The reactions of the community to save their lives are exercised by conforming to the agreed evacuation plan, knowledge and awareness of the people.



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Observer Meeting to Evaluate the Bantul Drill

LESSONS LEARNT & POTENTIAL FOR REPLICATION

The tsunami drill was prepared and coordinated by the local working group. Local facilitators were involved in organising people in villages. The general preparation included technicalities and provision of thorough information to all involved stakeholders. The scenario and the script for the drill were composed in consultation with BMKG, to guide the sequential events, the interactions of the participating stakeholders and the operation of the existing early warning components.

A series of preceding activities carried out in stages to enable familiarity for smooth participation by the involved stakeholders: planning to implement the agreed scenario, table top simulation, general rehearsal and tsunami drill. While it was felt that the implemented drill met the objectives, the performance of the PUSDALOPS personnel and the stakeholders, and the operational technology remain areas to be observed for future improvement.

The approach of implementing such a tsunami drill can be repeated within Bantul or replicated in other communities. Such an exercise may be conducted in rather simpler forms: table top simulation, 'run away' or testing communication technology. Adjustment of the scenario and the script must be in consultation with the preparedness of the stakeholders and the local technical components.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Various stakeholders participated in and contributed to make the tsunami drill possible. Among others are the local authorities: Bupati, Regional Secretary, Assistant to Bupati, District Military Commander, District Police Chief, communities from the villages of Gadingsari and Poncosari, related government agencies, non-government organisations, the private sector and the German Red Cross.

The Ministry of RISTEK assisted in the implementation of the table top simulation and in the coordination of observers from the national level: BMKG, BNPB, POLRI, TNI, DEPLU, PMI, MPBI, GTZ IS, etc.

The working group, local facilitators and GTZ IS played important roles in planning and coordination for the overall tsunami drill exercise. Through clear division of tasks, each of the assigned personnel performed their tasks accordingly.



Local Warning Mechanism in Bantul

Scenario of Tsunami Drill in Bantul - 24.12.2008



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